

REMARKS

Claims 1-10, 13-14, 16-17 and 34 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 13, and 14 have been amended, claim 34 has been added, and claims 11-12, 15, and 18-33 have been cancelled as a result of this response. Claim 1 is the sole independent claim.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicants acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claims 12-13, 15, 22-23, and 26 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants submit that independent claim 1 has been placed in condition for allowance by incorporating the subject matter of dependent claims 11 and 12, thereby placing claims 1-10, 13-14, 16-17 and 34 in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and issuance of a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

CLAIM OBJECTION

The Examiner objected to claims 1 and 29 due to a minor informality. This objection is moot with respect to claim 29 due to the cancellation of this claim. Claim 1 has been amended to overcome this minor informality.

ART REJECTIONS

Claims 1-2, 14, 16, 18-19, 25, 27, and 29 have been objected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,577,129 to Ehara; Claims 2, 4-5, 30, and 30-33 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ehara and further in view of US Patent No. 6,275, 593 to Garcia et al.; Claims 6-10 and 20-21 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ehara in view of U.S. Patent No. 6, 448, 599 to Wang and U.S. Patent No. 5,930,584 to Sun; Claim 17 and 28 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ehara in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,088,463 to Rombach et al.; Claims 11 and 22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ehara in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,453,048 to Akino. Each of these rejections is rendered moot, by either the incorporation of allowable subject matter of dependent claims 11 and 12 into independent claim 1 or by the cancellation of various claims. Accordingly, reconsideration of the rejection and the allowance of claims 1-10, 13-14, 16-17 and 34 is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the rejection and allowance of claims 1-10, 13-14, 16-17 and 34 is respectfully requested.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact John A. Castellano at the telephone number of the undersigned below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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